

are such an integral part of the Chamber's history. The purpose in forming this committee was to sustain a strong partnership with the Past Chairs by engaging in dialog about the Chamber's history and its future."

Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous pleasure to join my friends at the Galveston Chamber of Commerce in saluting these past chairs for their years of service to the people of Galveston. I am truly honored to serve as their representative and hope all my colleagues all join me in congratulating these outstanding leaders. Those being honored on February 3 include: Vandy Anderson, Armin Cantini, Carolyn Clyburn, Gene Curry, Henry Freudenburg, Don Gartman, Greg Harrington, Garry Kaufman, Betty Massey, Jerry Mohn, Richard Moore, Roger "Bo" Quiroga, Dr. Ben Raimer, Bix Rathburn, Betty Schocke, Johnny Smecca, Marshall Stein, John Tindel, Lee Otis "Otie" Zapp, Jr.

BLACK JANUARY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, as the co-chairman of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, I rise today to join with the people of Azerbaijan to commemorate the tragic events of "Black January."

On January 19, 1990, approximately 26,000 Soviet troops stormed Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku in tanks and armored vehicles. That night, the Soviet military bulldozed innocent Azeris and opened indiscriminate fire on peaceful demonstrators, including women and children. According to Azerbaijani sources, as a result of these merciless acts 131 people were killed, 611 were injured, 841 were arrested, and 5 went missing.

The Human Rights Watch report "Black January in Azerbaijan" states that "among the most heinous violations of human rights during the Baku incursion were the numerous attacks on medical personnel, ambulances, and even hospitals." The report concludes that the violence used by the Soviet Army constituted an exercise in collective punishment and that the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in other Republics of the Soviet Union.

Far from crushing the spirit of Azeris, the atrocities of Black January instead consolidated the rising independence movements in the country and united the Azerbaijani nation in its quest for freedom. Today, Azerbaijan is a critical and strategic ally of the United States and is preparing to celebrate 20 years of independence from the Soviet Union.

It is my honor to thank the Azerbaijani people for their friendship and to offer my thoughts and prayers to the families of those who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan. I encourage my colleagues to visit the very moving memorial to Black January in Baku that honors the memories of those killed in these attacks by the Soviet military and to join with me today in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate this tragedy.

HONORING CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR PATRICIA WIGGINS

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my long-time friend, California State Senator Patricia Wiggins, who recently retired after a long and effective career in public service. From her first years in Sonoma County politics in the 1980s through her terms in the California legislature as an Assemblymember and a Senator, Pat Wiggins was a leader of vision and compassion.

Born and raised in Southern California, Pat grew up in a labor household and, with her father's training, was an accomplished parachutist. At the age of 38, she became the first in her family to graduate from college, earning an English degree with honors from UCLA. She worked as a systems analyst and, in 1979, met a software engineer, Guy Conner, her future husband. They have two stepsons, Jim and Steve Silverman, and four grandchildren.

Wiggins' first political job was with the Nuclear Freeze in 1982. After the couple moved to Santa Rosa, California, in 1984, she worked on several political campaigns and eventually became involved in local land use issues when trail access to Annadel State Park was threatened by development. She was a leader in Santa Rosa's growing liberal environmentalism, and an activist in supporting women and women's issues. In 1994, she was elected to the Santa Rosa City Council.

In 1998, she was elected to the California Assembly and in 2006 to the California Senate. As a State legislator, Pat continued to demonstrate leadership in environmental and social issues. In the Assembly she founded the legislature's Smart Growth Caucus and authored laws on land use planning and compact development (including social equity). In the Senate, she focused on a broad range of issues including agriculture, youth employment, land use, political reform, health care, veterans' affairs, waste reduction, working families, and education. In 2008, she had the most bills approved by the legislature and the most signed into law of anyone in the California legislature.

Guy Conner, her husband and political partner for many years, describes Pat Wiggins as "the finest grass roots politician" he has ever known. She inspired many of us in Sonoma County by demonstrating how a leader works collaboratively for an impressive record of accomplishments while maintaining a commitment to progressive values.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Senator Patricia Wiggins on her many successful years in public service and wish her luck in her retirement. Her voice will be missed in Sacramento.

HONORING JEREMY PHILLIP THON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremy Phillip

Thon. Jeremy is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremy has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jeremy has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jeremy has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and became an Ordeal Member of the Order of the Arrow. Jeremy has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jeremy designed and supervised the construction of a handicap-accessible deer blind and nature viewing stand at Smithville Lake, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jeremy Phillip Thon for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE YAHRZEIT OF BETH SHARON SAMUELS

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the fourth anniversary of the passing of Beth Sharon Samuels, an extraordinary Angelino who lost her life to cancer in January 2007 at the age of 31.

Beth grew up in Los Angeles, attending the Yeshiva University High School of Los Angeles and graduating as valedictorian. She went on to study at a women's seminary in Israel before graduating from Columbia University with a degree in mathematics. She then completed a three-year program at the Drisha Institute in Bible and Talmud, a Ph.D. in math at Yale, and earned an assistant professorship at the University of California, Berkeley. In the meantime, she gave birth to a daughter, Danelle, and later to daughter Natalia while undergoing intensive chemotherapy treatments.

Beth remains with us, even with increasing distance from her passing. Last year, Beth's friends and family published *The Wisdom of Bat Sheva: The Dr. Beth Samuels Memorial Volume*, a series of lectures and discussions on Torah learning, including an essay by Beth. The book highlights that Beth's spirit continues to teach and inspire. Beth was such a powerful force of spirituality, learning, and divine presence, and her memory will continue to serve as a powerful blessing.

My condolences go out to her parents, Elana and Zachary, her husband, Ari, her daughters Danelle and Natalia and her extended friends and family on this solemn occasion.